

vision. As a result of this action today, consumers will receive the benefits of lower prices, better quality and greater choices in their telephone and cable services, and they will continue to benefit from a diversity of voices and viewpoints in radio, television, and the print media.

I want to thank the bipartisan leadership of the conference that produced this landmark legislation—Senators Pressler and Hollings and Representatives Bliley, Dingell, Fields, and Markey. I also want to thank all those in my administration from the Justice Department, the Commerce Department, and the Education Department for their hard work on this bill over the past 3 years. And I want to give a special thanks to Vice President Gore who began talking about the information superhighway nearly 20 years ago and who I know is very proud to see this legislation enacted today.

With this legislation today we are building the information superhighway that will lead all Americans into a more prosperous future.

Proclamation 6864—American Heart Month, 1996

February 1, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

There are few among us whose lives have not been touched by the devastating effects of heart disease. Cardiovascular disease, which includes heart disease and stroke, takes one million of our citizens each year, and heart disease remains the single leading cause of death in this country. Millions of Americans suffer from high blood pressure, and millions more have high levels of blood cholesterol. Studies also show sharp increases in the number of people who are overweight and physically inactive.

It is, however, encouraging that public health efforts are raising awareness of the risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Though some—family history and age—are inescapable, the risks posed by high blood pressure and high cholesterol, lack of exercise, smoking, diabetes, and obesity can be greatly reduced through modifications to personal be-

havior. Advances in research have helped us to gain a better understanding of heart disease, provided new diagnostic methods, and helped develop treatments that save lives and vastly improve the outlook for stricken patients.

We can be proud that the Federal Government has contributed to the fight against heart disease by supporting the efforts of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, and by promoting new dietary and health guidelines. The American Heart Association, through research, education programs, and the work of its vital network of volunteers, has also played a crucial role.

As we observe American Heart Month, let us build on our achievements by learning more about the causes of heart disease and by making the changes we can to improve our cardiovascular health. Recognizing that even small adjustments to diet and exercise habits can yield significant benefits, we can help those who already suffer from heart disease and encourage those who are taking their first steps toward better, healthier lives.

In recognition of the need for all Americans to become involved in the work to stop heart disease, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 843; 36 U.S.C. 169b), has requested that the President issue an annual proclamation designating February as “American Heart Month.”

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim February 1996, as American Heart Month. I call upon the Governors of the several States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in reaffirming our commitment to combating cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 2, 1996]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 5.

Remarks at a Dinner Honoring President Chirac

February 1, 1996

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening, President Chirac, Mrs. Chirac, members of the French delegation, to our distinguished guests from France and the United States, Hillary and I are delighted to welcome a great friend of our country to America's house.

As President tonight I am thinking of the experience of one of my most illustrious predecessors, Thomas Jefferson. As every American knows, when Thomas Jefferson was Minister to France, he developed a fondness for everything French. When he returned home, his political opponents tried to turn the American people against him by accusing him of excessive Francophilia. [Laughter] Patrick Henry struck the harshest blow. He denounced Jefferson, and I quote, for "abjuring his native victuals" in favor of French cuisine. [Laughter] Somehow Jefferson overcame the attack and went on to become President. And thank goodness, today Americans consider a good French meal to be a supreme treat, not high treason. [Laughter] Still, I feel compelled to make full disclosure to our French guests, our extraordinary White House chef, Walter Scheib, is an American. [Laughter]

A decade before Thomas Jefferson went to France, France came to the aid of American people. Dozens of ships carrying cannon, rifles, mortars, and clothing crossed the Atlantic to supply those who were fighting here for our independence. At Yorktown, General George Washington's troops were one-half French. And together with the French fleet, they decided our great revolutionary struggle in freedom's favor there. So it is not an exaggeration to say that the American people owe our liberty to France.

Today, freedom-loving people all over the world still look to France, not only for its

strength, but for its values, the tolerance, the freedom, the process. We see that in Bosnia where the heroism of France's soldiers and the determination of its President are helping peace to take hold.

We see it in Africa where France is battling poverty and disease to bring hope to millions. We see it in Europe where French leadership is transforming Jean Monnet's vision of an undivided continent finally into a reality.

And we see it in the struggle that France is waging against the forces of destruction in the modern world, against the terrorism, the organized crime, the drug trafficking—forces from which none of us are immune.

Mr. President, I am grateful to have you as our partner in facing all these common challenges. I have long admired your political tenacity, and I have a suggestion that in France they should begin to call you, "Le Comeback Kid." [Laughter] I also think all of my fellow Americans should know that, as far as I know, the President is the only foreign head of state who once worked behind the counter at a Howard Johnson's restaurant. [Laughter]

I know the deep affection he developed for our Nation lives on and that he still takes vacations in California. Today, he gave me some good advice; he suggested that I should spend a little time out there in the next few months. [Laughter]

Most of all, Mr. President, let me say I admire the course you have set for France and the strength and determination which you are bringing to pursuing that course. Our nations have a special responsibility to lead by example and by action. Under your leadership, France is meeting that responsibility. And the United States is very, very proud to be a partner on the verge of a new century with our very first ally.

And so let us all raise a glass to France, to its President and First Lady, and to our enduring alliance. Long live our two nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:36 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.